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Robert E. Webster

DOB 23 Oct 28 - Ohio

CIA has no operational relationship
with Mr. Webster - letter from
Dulles to Bundy dated 15 Apr 61

Was employed as plastic expert by
the Land Development Corp. of Cleveland
Ohio

~~Sub~~ enlisted electronics specialist
in U.S. Navy.

Traveled to USSR in connection with
the American Exhibition in Moscow, 1959.

17 Oct 59 officially renounced his
U.S. Citizenship.

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180-10144-10071

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No file opening request

Probably opened on 10/20/59 from news articles^{dated 10/17-20/59 -} - earliest 3rd agency was AF doc. 10/23/59.

Webster, Robert E.

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Vol. I

Bio sheets & newspaper articles provide following info:

- Webster made a series of trips to Moscow during March-July 1959 in conjunction w/ Rand Corp. exhibit at the Moscow Exhibition.
- Webster disappeared "on a trip" on 9/10/59 when the Rand Corp. personnel were scheduled to leave Moscow.
- X reportedly renounced U.S. cit. @ Oct. 17-19, 1959. Was informed by Sovs. that if he accepted Sov. cit. he wouldn't be able to leave country.

10/6/59 SD Telegram^{+1092. (H. Regan)} Moscow to Secy. State; RE: Receipt of letter from Webster stating his decision to remain in S.U. to live & work. Emb. unable to determine X's whereabouts in Leningrad.

10/8/59 MFR by [Emmett J. McManthey] SR / COP / FI; RE: ¹¹¹¹¹³³² Attempts to locate Webster; receipt of (above) Emb. cable.

- ATIC Cleveland asked whether W was carrying out clandestine work for CIA which hadn't been coordinated w/ them. Was assured that this was not case & to best of our knowledge, X had not been briefed by & was unknown to either DDP or OO officers.
- Check made w/ Mr. Mills; had encountered W on a few social occasions; we will consult w/ Messrs. Winkelman & Rayles to produce a more complete picture of W.

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10/20/59 MFR, by Bruce L. Solie, OS/SRS; RE: Webster

- Egerton advised Papier called Roman re Agency interest in W.
- OS files - no clearance; was an OO/c int. in W in late May '59, but W wasn't contacted by OO/c prior to trips to USSR.
- CI/OA files - no record.

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R. E. Webster (cont.)

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- 10/21/59 Office Memo, E. S. Rittenburg, Cleveland to Chief, ^{Contact Dir.,} RCM, Attn: Support Br. (Crowley); RE: R. E. Webster case at recent Machine Searching Conference on 10/20/59 - Our org. has no interest in matter.

- 10/22/59 Office Memo, Rittenburg, Cleveland Resident Agent to Chief, ^{Contact} Dir.; Attn: Support (Crowley); RE: Webster - Questions asked by Major Rlt. Cochran of OSI:

- a) Is this office doing anything re W's defection?
- b) If not, do they contemplate doing anything?
- c) What would this office have done if W ret. normally?

Rittenburg called next day w/ response that they knew only what was in newspapers re W; (not very cooperative)

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- 10/30/59 Office Memo, Rittenburg to Crowley; RE: Kent (of WRU) conversation w/ H. J. Rand re R. E. Webster

- 10/26/59 Memo, Sheffield Edwards to Dir., FBI, ^{Agency interest in} RE: Webster

- W has never been used by Agency: was considered for debriefing May-June 1959, however he wasn't contacted prior to dep. for USSR.

[- Agency does have a ~~ltd~~ contractual relationship w/ Cleveland office of Rand Develop. Corp. on develop. of tech. material of int. to Agency. In view of W's empl. w/ RDC, please forward any info. obtained in investig. of W.]

10/23/59 Info. on Vera Luchenko, W's girlfriend

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10/28/59 Report on W:

✓ W was given sec. clearance 6/5/59 but never had access to military info.

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R. E. Webster (cont.)

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(cont.)

Report of interview of W by Snyder, ^{on 10/17/59} in presence of H. J. Rand & Geo. Bookbinder at the DBVIR in Moscow. - reasons for defection; also signed renunciation of U.S. cit.

3/22/60 Office Memo, Rittenburg to Act. Chief, Contact Div.; Attn: Support Branch (Crowley) - 1st indication (from 3/22/60 Cleveland Press article) of W's desire to ret. to U.S.

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3/25/60 DM, Rittenburg to Yarnie

- Rand contacted by W's father to aid in bringing W home.
- Rand indicated he would contact SD & Sov. Emb. Wash. to see what could be done.
- R quoted Snyder of US Emb Moscow as saying there would be no difficulty from U.S. side. Even though W is Sov. cit., Sov. quota is never filled & since he's broken no laws, he should be able to enter US as alien if necessary.
- R indicated may be value in bringing W back for intell. reasons.

Several Office Memo's RE W's interest & actions re return to US.

12/20/60 File Review of Office of Security files, SD reflected (besides doc. re W's defection) the following:

5/4/60 Telegram (#2697) Am Emb Moscow to SD: RE: Visit of W that afternoon; interviewed by Security & Consular Officers; asked for advice on ret. to US.

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- States that W's father should be advised to execute visa petition & also forward notarized letters of invitation from self & Mrs. W. for W's use in making Sov. exit visa app.
- W was given standard inst. cloth. to circulate letters entries into Emb.

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R.E. Webster

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Vol. I contains third agency docs. as follows:

17 FBI Reports -

2 Rept. of AF Memos

11-111335

4 SA docs. - 11/12/59; 3/22/60; 4/4/60; 6/8/60

Vol. II ✓ - PRQ - Part I Undated; sometime after return to US

- News articles re W's ^{permission} ~~retention~~ to ret. to US @ 5/16/62.

- Undated Memo, [Jae. B.] Hare, Assessment & Evaluation Staff, Office of Inq. to Mr. Rudy Salaban, SR/6 Attaching:

Report of Court Assessment of R.E. Webster - Assessed on 7/23-24/62

- Report based on psych. testing

- Attach. to Pitt Report 21345 - "Hist of Hoon's Retention Items from R.E. Webster

3rd Agency - 1 FBI Report of 1/8/62

Vol. III

Office Memos from Cleveland re Rand & W's ret.

Correspondence bet. W & family

CIA Info Report

Locality: USSR

Subj: Henigrod Scientist Acc. Dist. of Poly. Plastics (NII PP)
Dev. & Org. of Sov. Plastics Tech.

Date of Info: 11/18/59 - 4/18/62

Report # 00-B 3232798

CA/00 Case 38246

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Joint report of Foreign Tech. Div., AF Systems Command, & CIA

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R.S. Webster

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Vol. III (cont.)

6/4/62 Request for Approval or Investigative Action

To: CI/Op. App. & Supp. Div.

From: AC/SR/6/Supp.

: Sec. Supp. Div. /DS

R.T. Balaban

Reqs.: Provisional Covert Security Approval

Spec. Area of Use: Debriefing to obtain Sov. realties data

Clearance req. to debrief Subj. re experience as a resident of S.U. prior to & during defection to USSR @ 9/10/59.

6/22/62 Memo, DD Security (Invest. & Oper. Supp.) to Chief, SR Div.; Attn: Balaban

- A TCSA may be granted for use as described; subj. is not to represent himself nor to be represented as an emp. of CIA. If change in status is desired, new request should be made.

7/5/62 Author. to expend funds ~~for~~ ^{for} debriefing of Covert Associate ^(REW) of int. to SR Div.

Funds for use of safe house approx. 14 days. Chargeable to Project

DDA

7/11/62 Memo: Request for Handwriting Analysis

7/12/62 Telememo [B.K. Stewart] Pittsburgh, to EE, USSR (Booley), Att. data recorded on Sov. personalities

7/16/62 Personal History Statement of Webster

7/18/62 Memo [Jas & Margen] Chief TS B/GARB to Chief AD/P/SC; RE: Handwriting analysis re per req. of 7/11/62

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Robert E. Webster

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7/24/64 MFR ^{by Howard T. Stark,]} RE: Assessment of R.W. in area of plastics

7/24/62 Interview Report by Dr. [Chas. A. Bohrer] 10pp. ; RE:

Background info. of N^o; ⁱⁿ ~~actual~~ stay in S.U. & ret. to U.S.

?s: Is this man Sov. controlled? Highly unlikely.

If not, could he become so? Possibly, if things don't go well in future & he is offered suitable financial reward.

Undated MFR of 7/19/62 Debriefing of R.E.W. by [Red Bennett] CA/PROP/OB ;
RE: Views on Sov. attitudes N/atto additional notes

8/1/62 MFR by [Victor F. Zimin] RE: Areas in interrogation which cast a shadow on W's bona fides.

8/27/62 Memo, Asst. Stone, IR/CR to [Eleanor Reed] RE: Appraisal of exten.

8/30/62 Memo, [S. Duncan] SR/CI/Sec to SK/6/support ; RE: Photo Ident.

11/1/62 Memo, [Kirk R. Harris] Chief, SE/6 RE: Debriefing of REW 7/16-17/62

I. Outline of Life Story of REW - complete chron.

II. Misc. info on Sov. Realities 1959-62: TV, taxis, ^{sociological & ec. conditions, prices,} mail, medical treatment, vote

III. Biog. info on Sov. Personalities known to W-1959-62

IV. Assessment of REW

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Vol. III 3rd Agency doc.

2 SA telegrams - 5/4/62 and 3/27/62

5 FBI reports 3/6/62 - 5/24/62

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R. E. Webster

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Vol. IV

4/16/63 Memo, Balaban to Chief, SR/6; RE: Debriefing of R. E. Webster

1. Subj. debriefed by undersigned together w/ OO/Contact Div. & AF reps. in Pittsburgh during 7/2-3/62.

Balaban = Rudy Valentino

~~Thomas~~ Traneer = [Keller Stewart]

= Robert Starling

= [Jack Lague]

= Major E. J. Zetina

= Mr. F. G. Jaycocks

} OO Office, Pittsburgh

} AF Foreign Sec. Div., Wright Patterson AFB, Ohio

Recommended that subj. be brought to D.C. for detailed debriefing.

Arrangements for 2nd debriefing made by OS

Subj. stayed at Marriott Hotel, Key Budge, during 7/15-28/62.

Enclosure A: List of staff personnel who participated in debriefing.

" B: Notations made by Balaban during various phases of debriefing.

" C: Secrecy agreement, dated 7/16/62, signed by Subj.

" D: " " & stmt. of truthfulness, signed by Subj.

" E: short diag. on Subj.

Refs to Oswald

5/11/64 Memo, Angleton to Dir., FBI re LHO

- Attached copy of names, addresses & phone #'s re S.U. - one address

Kondrat'yevskiy in Leningrad of Lev Prizentsev is same or similar to H's address here.

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12/5/66 MFR, from [T. Bender] re "Am. Reporters to USSR" w/ attached chron. re W.

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R. E. Webster

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5/10/67 Memo, [B. Keller Stewart] Jr. Chief, Pitts Office / to Dir. DCS; RE: RSW
- We've had no contact w/ W since 1/63 when we completed handling of him
under Case 38,246.

Vol. IV - 3rd agency materials

4 FBI Reports 10/22/64 - 2/13/67

INS bio sheet - 1969

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RE.W.

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Defection:

How aided by Sovs? Popov & Shaskin - high govt. officials (KGB)

How aided in obtaining employment?

Any contact w/ Sov. intell.? After attempts ^(3/60) to return to U.S.? After ret. to U.S.
contacts at Sov. Emb. in Moscow

- SA

- CTA

PRQ- P+I - why; when (1st deb.)?

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Debriefing

Did debriefing indicate any desire by Agency to use him

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